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COHN CONTINUES TO BREAK THE SILENCE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE;  
GOVERNOR SIGNS TWO BILLS

SACRAMENTO — With the stroke of his pen, the Governor eliminated two more barriers for victims of violence with his signature on two bills authored by Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn (D-Saratoga). Governor Davis signed AB 1909 creating a best practices for courts dealing with domestic violence, and AB 2252 that protects victims of sexual assault by allowing serial rape cases to be tried as one. Assemblywoman Cohn said *"I am pleased the Governor recognized the need to provide another level of protection for women and children who have been victims of violence and then are expected to relive their nightmare repeatedly in the court system."*

AB 2252 allows victims of rape and sexual assault to have their cases tried together in one county, thus eliminating a barrier to being revictimized in several trials. Sponsored by the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, Assemblywoman Cohn said, *"It is cruel to expect rape and child molestation victims to testify in multiple counties before these sexual predators. Sexual predators do not recognize county lines."* The new law allows a judge to consider whether to consolidate several rape cases into one trial. AB 2252 also adds several crimes to the list of offenses that can be used to prove a defendant is predisposed to commit sexual offenses.

At the same time, the Governor also signed AB 1909 that addresses the need to develop best practices within the court system that handles domestic violence cases. AB 1909 was the number one recommendation that came from last year's Assembly Select Committee on Domestic Violence hearing on *"The Judicial Process for Victims of Domestic Violence."* A passionate advocate for the issue, Cohn chairs the Select Committee on Domestic Violence. *"Both Santa Clara and San Diego are considered leaders in the handling of domestic violence cases. I know their work will provide a document other courts in California can duplicate."*

In conclusion, Cohn summarized *"Passage of these two bills ensures the uniformity and necessary tools to assist victims in safely navigating the court system rather than be revictimized by the very system that was set up to protect them."*

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